

DDI-3768-74

30 December 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: Associate Deputy Director for
Intelligence

SUBJECT : Perceptions of US-Soviet Strategic
Balance

REFERENCE : Memorandum to Dr. Proctor from
Mr. Stoertz, NIO/SP Request for
Intelligence Reports, dated
6 December 1974

1. We agree fully with the importance and need for in-depth research on the question of third-country perceptions of the US-USSR Strategic Balance. We have not, however, devoted any specific efforts to this question and, in view of our limited resources, do not have plans to do so in the near future. We do believe that we can contribute significantly to any such assessment because some of our people--in the Strategic Evaluation Center, Free World Branch and Western Forces Branch--do have a considerable "feel" for perceptions of the strategic balance as a result of on-going analysis and reporting.

2. Following are some general points on the subject which may be of interest to you.

a. We think third-country perceptions of the strategic balance have become a major policy issue--rightly or wrongly--because of the stress placed on them by the Secretary for Defense and, in a somewhat different vein, by the Secretary of State.

b. The Secretary of Defense in some of his remarks, and we in some of our own approaches, have suggested that third-country perceptions are fairly discreet reflections of the objective balance. This may not be true as whatever the US says officially and unofficially about the balance is in all probability the greatest influence on third-country perceptions.



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c. Third-country public media are an important source of insight into this subject. This is an area where contractors--in addition to FBIS--could help any assessment considerably. I understand Andy Marshall has let some contracts on this subject and it would be useful to take advantage of the efforts under his aegis for any study the Agency may undertake.

d. The Departments of State and Defense, and some private organizations such as the Rand Corporation, may in some cases have better direct lines into relevant third-country elite perceptions of the balance than does CIA, especially as regards allied countries. We should capitalize on their knowledge and analysis.

3. In short, this Office has not specifically analyzed the third country perception question but by the very nature of our mission we are "close to the subject" and believe we are in a position to contribute to this important area of research however it is undertaken.

[Redacted Signature]

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E. H. KNOCHE
Director
Strategic Research

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